United Nations S/2004/697

Security Council

Distr.: General
27 August 2004

Original: English

Second report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1528 (2004) of 27 February 2004, by which the Council requested me to report to it every three months on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire, the implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement and the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (ONUCI). This report covers major developments since my report of 2 June 2004 (S/2004/443).

II. Developments in the peace process

2. During the reporting period, the Ivorian peace process continued to face serious difficulties. Commitments made by the Ivorian parties to move forward on implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement have however given rise to cautious optimism.

3. It will be recalled that a political impasse began early in March, following the decision of a coalition of opposition parties to suspend their participation in the Government of National Reconciliation in protest against what they perceived as the slow pace of implementation of the reforms envisaged under the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement. As the impasse continued into June and the early part of July, it was exacerbated by a deteriorating security situation. On several occasions, disruptive youth groups carried out violent attacks against French troops (Licorne force) and United Nations personnel and property. On 5 June, some 500 "young patriots" staged a violent demonstration outside the French military base in Abidjan, demanding that the Licorne force either disarm the Forces nouvelles or leave the country. On 6 June, a group of about 30 "uncontrolled elements" of the Forces nouvelles attacked the positions of the Forces armées nationales de Côte d'Ivoire (FANCI) at Gohitafla, located in the centre-west of the country. The FANCI and Licorne forces repelled the attack, which resulted in some 20 deaths, mainly of civilians. In retaliation, FANCI reportedly used helicopters to attack some positions in Forces nouvelles-controlled areas in the north, resulting in a number of injuries. The Forces nouvelles denied any involvement in the attack and alleged that it had been mounted as part of the campaign to discredit it and justify military action by FANCI. In the aftermath, both FANCI and Forces nouvelles increased their level of

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alert and reinforced their positions along the zone of confidence. On 10 June, FANCI established a checkpoint inside the zone of confidence, north of Kotouba.

4. On 7 June, as the President, Laurent Gbagbo, left Côte d'Ivoire for a private visit to the United States of America, a group of "young patriots" held a violent demonstration outside the French Embassy in Abidjan. They later proceeded to randomly attack Licorne and United Nations vehicles. The national police eventually intervened to disperse them, but one ONUCI military observer sustained minor injuries. Demonstrations by "young patriots" were also reported on 7 July in San-Pédro, where two ONUCI military observers came under attack but were not injured. Altogether, some 30 ONUCI vehicles in Abidjan and San-Pédro were damaged. Demonstrations against ONUCI and French targets by the "young patriots" continued in several towns, including Abidjan, Port Bouet and Yamoussoukro, for a number of days thereafter. The protestors accused the international community of complicity in the earlier incident at Gohitafla.

5. Several initiatives were taken by international stakeholders to defuse the tensions and to advance the peace process. The Monitoring Committee established under the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement issued a communiqué on 7 June, in which it expressed its serious concern at the recent upsurge in violence in Côte d'Ivoire, condemned the attack perpetrated at Gohitafla and recommended that action be taken to identify those responsible. Early in June, my Special Representative, Albert Tévoédjrè, had extensive consultations with President Gbagbo, the Prime Minister, Seydou Diarra, the Speaker of the National Assembly, and the leaders of Ivorian political parties on ways to overcome the impasse in the peace process.

6. Meanwhile, in a parallel effort to resume dialogue among the Ivorian political forces, the Prime Minister engaged in consultations with the coalition of opposition parties known as the "Coalition des Marcoussistes". On 20 June, the President of Ghana, John Agyekum Kufuor, the President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo, the President of Togo, Gnassingbe Eyadema, and the Executive Secretary of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Mohamed Ibn Chambas, met with President Gbagbo in Abuja, at an ECOWAS mini-summit at which strategies to put the Ivorian peace process back on track were discussed. The mini-summit focused on the need to restore the integrity of the Government of National Reconciliation, following President Gbagbo's decision to dismiss three opposition Ministers on 18 May, including the Secretary-General of the Forces nouvelles, Guillaume Soro, and to resume dialogue between the President and the opposition.

7. In a televised speech on 21 June, President Gbagbo announced that, following the mini-summit, he was determined to remove all obstacles to the Ivorian peace process. He also condemned all attacks against French citizens and United Nations personnel, whom he described as "allies in the peace process". While reiterating his support to the Prime Minister, the President encouraged the Government to submit without delay all remaining draft laws envisaged under the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement to the National Assembly for adoption. He concluded by pointing to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, the reunification of the country and the elections to be held in October 2005 as the three main priorities for restoring peace and normalcy in Côte d'Ivoire.

8. These national and subregional initiatives were reinforced by the Security Council mission to West Africa, which visited Abidjan on 23 and 24 June. The mission reiterated to the Ivorian parties the concerns of the international community

about the political impasse, the paralysis of the Government of National Reconciliation and the lack of overall security in the country. In addition, it urged the President and the Prime Minister to consult with all parties signatory to the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement with a view to restoring the integrity of the Government and resuming its activities, to agree on a timetable for the implementation of the Agreement and to ensure the adoption of all the envisaged legal reforms by the National Assembly by 28 July. The mission also called on the Ivorian parties to demonstrate genuine political will and leadership in fulfilling their obligations under the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement. The mission emphasized that the Agreement remained the only framework for the country's return to normalcy and that the Security Council would consider appropriate, targeted measures against individuals who obstructed its implementation.

9. On 25 June, the President of Gabon, Omar Bongo Ondimba, met President Gbagbo in Libreville to explore ways of resuming dialogue among all Ivorian political forces, reviving the activities of the Government of National Reconciliation and other steps to overcome the political impasse and, in particular, prepare for open and transparent presidential elections in October 2005. Early in July, President Bongo met with the major Ivorian political forces, including representatives of the Coalition des Marcoussistes, with the participation of the leader of the Rally of the Republicans, Alassane Ouattara; the Forces nouvelles; and President Gbagbo's political party, the Ivorian Patriotic Front.

10. On 29 and 30 June, President Gbagbo met with the Coalition des Marcoussistes in Abidjan, in the presence of the Prime Minister, in an attempt to resume the political dialogue. The agenda included the return of the three dismissed Ministers to the Government of National Reconciliation and the delegation of powers from the President to the Prime Minister. The Forces nouvelles did not participate in the meeting, although their spokesperson, Sidiki Konate, had previously indicated that the movement would stand by any agreement reached there by the other members of the Coalition des Marcoussistes.

11. These mediation efforts helped to set the stage for the holding of a mini-summit on Côte d'Ivoire, which I convened on 6 July in Addis Ababa, on the sidelines of the third African Union summit. The meeting was attended by the Presidents of Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Ghana, Mali and Nigeria, as well as the Prime Minister of Togo and the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS. The meeting called on the Ivorian parties to increase their efforts to overcome the political impasse; restore the integrity of, and confidence in, the Government of National Reconciliation; and proceed with the dismantling of all paramilitary and militia groups. President Gbagbo and Prime Minister Diarra were called upon to take action to resume the effective functioning of the Government of National Reconciliation, and the Government was urged to address all remaining legal reforms envisaged under the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement without further delay. The Ivorian parties were urged to establish security conditions necessary for the resumption of State administration and normal economic activities nationwide, as well as for the organization of the elections in October 2005. The meeting also appealed to the concerned Ivorian parties to participate in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process without further delay or pre-conditions.

12. It was also decided that a high-level meeting of all the Ivorian political forces, including the President and the Prime Minister, would be convened in Accra on

29 July, to give impetus to the peace process. It was also agreed that the following confidence-building measures would be taken prior to the Accra meeting: President Gbagbo would meet with the leaders of all Ivorian political forces; the National Assembly would adopt all legal reforms envisaged under the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement before the end of July; the Joint Côte d'Ivoire-Mali and Côte d'Ivoire-Burkina Faso Commissions would be reactivated; and the Heads of State of Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Mali would hold a tripartite meeting to prepare the ground for the success of the Accra summit.

13. Accordingly, the Joint Côte d'Ivoire-Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire-Mali Commissions met from 15 to 17 July in Abidjan and from 23 to 25 July in Bamako, respectively. The tripartite summit of the Heads of State of Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Mali was held on 27 July in Bamako. President Gbagbo also met with the leaders of some Ivorian political forces. Following extensive deliberations, the National Assembly unanimously adopted amendments to the law of land tenure. It did not however reach agreement on amendments to the nationality code and the membership of the Independent Electoral Commission before the conclusion of its ordinary session on 28 July.

The Accra III high-level meeting

14. The high-level meeting on Côte d'Ivoire was held in Accra on 29 and 30 July 2004 and brought together 13 African Heads of State, including President Kufuor of Ghana, in his capacity as Chairperson of ECOWAS, and President Obasanjo of Nigeria, in his capacity as Chairperson of the African Union. The meeting, which I chaired jointly with President Kufuor, was also attended by the Prime Minister of Angola, senior representatives of three other African countries, the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission. President Gbagbo and Prime Minister Diarra, and most of the leaders of the 10 Ivorian political forces signatory to the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement, also participated in the meeting.

15. After two days of intense discussions, the parties reached a consensus on how to address the key outstanding issues facing the peace process, and signed the Accra III Agreement, which provides a framework and a timetable for the reactivation of the peace process with a view to ensuring the full implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement. With regard to the controversial issue of the revision of article 35 concerning eligibility to the presidency, the parties agreed that President Gbagbo should use the powers conferred upon him by the Constitution to implement, by the end of September, the provisions regarding this matter in the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement. In addition, the parties agreed that the extraordinary session of the National Assembly, convened by President Gbagbo on 28 July, should proceed with the adoption, by the end of August, of all legal reforms envisaged under the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement.

16. The parties committed themselves to the commencement of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process by 15 October, by which date the key legal reforms envisaged under the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement should be adopted and the necessary technical preparations for the process completed. They also agreed that the process should include all paramilitary and militia groups.

17. In addition, the parties agreed on the need for a clear delegation of powers from the President to the Prime Minister. President Gbagbo thus undertook to issue

a decree, which would specify the areas covered by the delegation of powers, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement, and to implement adequate additional measures in this regard. Agreement was also reached on the urgent need to resume the work of the Government of National Reconciliation, in order to ensure the implementation of the Agreement and the country's progressive return to normalcy. In addition, the parties agreed that a meeting of the Council of Ministers would be convened within a week of the signing of the Accra III Agreement.

18. The parties committed themselves to cooperating fully with the International Commission of Inquiry, established by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in accordance with the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement, to investigate the human rights violations perpetrated in Côte d'Ivoire since the beginning of the crisis on 19 September 2002. They also agreed on the urgent need to establish the National Human Rights Commission, also provided for in the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement. Finally, the parties agreed to establish a tripartite monitoring group, comprising the representatives in Côte d'Ivoire of ECOWAS, the African Union and ONUCI. The monitoring group was requested to submit fortnightly reports on progress in the implementation of the Accra III Agreement to the Chairperson of ECOWAS, the Chairperson of the African Union, and to myself.

19. A number of steps have been taken towards the implementation of the Accra III Agreement. On 9 August, President Gbagbo issued two presidential decrees: the first restored the three previously dismissed opposition Ministers to their functions within the Government of National Reconciliation, while the second delegated powers from the President to the Prime Minister, to enable the latter to implement relevant provisions of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement. On the same day, a full Council of Ministers meeting was held attended by the three reinstated Ministers, including the Secretary-General of the Force nouvelles. ONUCI facilitated the travel of the Forces nouvelles Ministers from Bouaké to Abidjan to attend the meeting. A second meeting of the Council of Ministers was held on 12 August. On 11 August, an extraordinary session of the National Assembly began to consider draft legislation envisaged under the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement.

20. Meanwhile, the tripartite Monitoring Group began its activities chaired by the Special Representative of the ECOWAS Executive Secretary in Abidjan. I have transmitted to the Council the first report received from the Monitoring Group (see S/2004/667), in which the actions taken by the parties to fulfil their obligations and commitments under the Agreement are presented. In the meantime, the Monitoring Committee established under the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement and chaired by my Special Representative continues to follow progress in the overall peace process, thus complementing the work of the Monitoring Group. During the reporting period, the Monitoring Committee intensified its efforts to resume dialogue between the parties and continued to play an important role in urging all the Ivorian parties to adhere to the commitments made under the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement.

III. Deployment of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire and the security situation

21. As at 20 August, the troop strength of ONUCI stood at 5,877, out of a total authorized strength of 6,240 military personnel. With the expected deployment of an engineer company from Pakistan by the end of August, the only outstanding deployment will be an aviation unit, for which consultations with a troop-contributing country are under way.

22. An integrated mission training centre has been established at the force headquarters in Abidjan, for the induction of all military staff. A situation centre and a joint operations centre have also been set up at force headquarters, while the establishment of communication links with both sector headquarters, East (Bouaké) and West (Daloa), is under way.

23. The force headquarters continues to operate from its temporary location in Abidjan at the Hotel Pergola, while awaiting the completion of the refurbishment of the future integrated mission headquarters. Within the country, the deployment of the former ECOMICI re-hatted contingents and an infantry battalion from Morocco to Sector East is close to completion. However, Sector East headquarters continues to be stationed in Zambakro, while its final premises in Bouaké are being completed. Meanwhile, Sector West headquarters is fully operational in Daloa. Deployment to Sector West was completed, following the arrival of the remaining two infantry battalions and an engineer company from Bangladesh. Deployment to the south also continued, with troops operational in San-Pédro and Tabou. A total of 153 military observers (out of 200) have deployed to the mission area, and have commenced operations in Korhogo, Danané, Séguéla, Odienné, Bouna, Man and Ferkessédougou, while their deployment to Abengourou and Gagnoa is under way.

24. The force's activities have focused on patrolling, including border patrolling and guard duties, as well as regular meetings and continuous liaison with FANCI, the military elements of the Forces nouvelles and the Licorne force. The force is also closely coordinating with humanitarian and development agencies to facilitate the delivery of assistance.

25. There has been significant progress in the deployment of the ONUCI civilian police component, which now includes 160 officers, out of an authorized strength of 350. Outside of Abidjan, police advisers are now deployed in San-Pédro, Yamoussoukro and Man, as well as to Sector headquarters in Daloa and Bouaké. ONUCI civilian police officers also assist in the mixed brigade in Bangolo, which includes gendarmes from the Ivorian internal security forces and Forces nouvelles elements, in training and mentoring, and facilitating cooperation between the two sides. In Sector West, a mixed committee, comprising personnel from the Gendarmerie, the Ivorian national police and the ONUCI civilian police component, has been established, to assist in the formulation of policing priorities. Similar committees are in the process of being established in all Gendarmerie and national police locations in Sector West.

26. The ONUCI civilian police component has developed training modules for courses in the maintenance of public law and order, community policing and the investigation of major crimes, including money-laundering. Specific training courses for Ivorian internal security services are also being developed in the field of human rights, in collaboration with the mission's human rights section. In addition,

a "training of trainers" course in close protection will be conducted early in September 2004 for 10 officers from the Ivorian national police and 10 gendarmes who will be trained together. Training initiatives in the north are being closely coordinated with progress in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, with a view to establishing adequate security conditions for the protection of civilians during the disarmament of the armed elements of the Forces nouvelles.

Security situation

27. The deployment of ONUCI has had a generally positive impact on the security situation in the country, which has continued to become more stable during the reporting period. However, a number of violent incidents have occurred, involving, primarily, rival factions of the Forces nouvelles in the north and various youth groups in Abidjan and militias in other parts of the country. These have led to an increased level of tension on both sides of the zone of confidence. In addition, the presence of mercenaries has been reported in both northern and southern areas of the country.

28. In the north, "unidentified" heavily armed elements, allegedly supporters of Staff Sergeant Ibrahim Coulibaly, launched an attack against the military elements of the Forces nouvelles stationed in the Korhogo area on 20 June. The incident resulted in 11 deaths and several injuries among the civilian population. The same armed elements then attacked the convoy of the Secretary-General of the Forces nouvelles, Guillaume Soro, who was returning to Bouaké from Korhogo; there were reportedly no injuries in the attack. On the same day, the head of the military elements of the Forces nouvelles issued a communiqué stating that the attackers had received support from President Gbagbo and the President of Guinea, Lansana Conté, and that additional security measures had been put in place to protect the population in areas suspected to be the target of future attacks. On 21 June, clashes between the rival factions of Soro and Coulibaly in Bouaké resulted in a series of summary executions, including that of a military commander close to Coulibaly. On 25 and 26 June, sporadic shooting between rival factions of the Forces nouvelles was again reported in Korhogo. Mass graves discovered since then in Korhogo have been the object of a ONUCI-led investigation.

29. In Abidjan, on 23 June, about 100 "young patriots" staged a hostile demonstration in front of the Hotel Tiama, at the time of a meeting between the visiting Security Council mission to West Africa and the Coalition des Marcoussistes. A United Nations vehicle was damaged during the demonstration. The following day, another group of "young patriots" stormed the chamber of the National Assembly, which was debating the draft law on the Independent Electoral Commission, to protest against the representation of the Forces nouvelles on the Commission.

30. The situation in Abidjan is currently calm, albeit tense. A strong presence of FANCI and Ivorian security forces has been maintaining overall security, but numerous paramilitary and youth groups continue to operate in the capital. In addition, a large number of checkpoints have been established, where incidents of extortion are increasingly reported.

31. Following the incident of 6 June at Gohitafla, FANCI reinforced their positions along the southern edge of the zone of confidence, in order to track possible infiltration by armed elements from the north. The western areas, primarily

to the west and north-west of Guiglo, remain the most volatile, however, owing in part to a large presence of Liberian and Burkinabé refugees. FANCI support to militias and their involvement in illegal activities have been widely reported in this region.

32. On 25 June, a FANCI soldier opened fire on a Licorne patrol near Yamoussoukro, resulting in the death of a Licorne soldier. The incident was considered to be an isolated event and there was no exchange of fire between FANCI and the Licorne patrol. However, tensions have been rising between local military forces in both the north and south and the impartial forces, especially the Licorne force. Both Forces nouvelles and FANCI elements have continued to impose limitations on the freedom of movement of the impartial forces.

33. A positive development was the resumption on 16 August of the Quadripartite Commission meetings of FANCI, the military elements of the Forces nouvelles, the Licorne force and ONUCI. The meetings focused on the reduction of checkpoints throughout the country, modalities for the withdrawal of heavy weapons and the cantonment of troops and preparations for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme.

IV. Regional aspects

34. ONUCI continues to collaborate with other peacekeeping operations and missions in West Africa to address inter-mission cooperation and cross-border issues. Efforts are under way to further develop joint patrolling of borders and improved lines of communication, in particular with the United Nations Mission in Liberia. Other cross-cutting issues are under consideration between the missions and will form the basis for recommendations to the Security Council in a report which will be submitted later this year.

V. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme

35. Under the Accra III Agreement, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process is to start on 15 October. In preparation, the National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration has updated its road map, which is based on the previously-developed joint plan of operations and covers six main areas. These are preliminary operations; awareness-raising; regrouping of forces; disarmament; demobilization; and reintegration. In view of the expanded presence of ONUCI forces, it is now planned to conduct the disarmament and demobilization process in two phases, starting in the north and then proceeding to the south, to be completed by 31 December. The National Commission has also intensified its work to rehabilitate the disarmament sites. A meeting of national stakeholders and international partners held on 13 August was useful for enhancing coordination.

36. The resumption after a five-month interruption of the meetings of the Quadripartite Commission is also a positive development with regard to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration issues. It is worth noting that the Ivorian parties at the meetings did not set any preconditions for the commencement of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process. Significant challenges

remain, however, including the formulation of plans to dismantle militias and paramilitary groups, and obtaining funding for the reintegration phase of the programme. The World Bank, which was to contribute to reintegration, suspended disbursements to Côte d'Ivoire, owing to non-payment of debt obligations. In the light of the conclusion of the Accra III Agreement, the World Bank is currently exploring ways to support the peace process. The Government, with support from Japan, the European Union, UNDP and other partners is expected to cover the costs of the disarmament and demobilization phases of the programme.

VI. Human rights

37. During the period under review, the human rights situation in Côte d'Ivoire has continued to be of serious concern. Grave human rights violations have occurred in the north, following inter-factional fighting within the Forces nouvelles. In the Government-controlled area, the situation has been marked by reports of ethnic tensions, including instances of harassment and intimidation of foreigners and civilians from the northern parts of the country by paramilitary and militia groups as well as other disruptive youth groups.

38. The clashes on 20 and 21 June between rival factions of the Forces nouvelles in Bouaké and Korhogo led to increased insecurity in northern areas. Following the attacks, Forces nouvelles elements reportedly conducted numerous house raids and arrests. Summary executions, as well as several instances of torture, inhuman and degrading treatment, persecution and involuntary disappearances, have also been reported. A ONUCI fact-finding mission which was dispatched into the area confirmed the existence of three mass graves containing at least 99 bodies of persons killed by gunshots or through suffocation. The ONUCI report has been submitted to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the International Commission of Inquiry for review prior to publication. A number of individuals are still being detained by the Forces nouvelles in relation to these events. ONUCI is in contact with the Forces nouvelles regarding the conditions of their detention and is seeking their liberation.

39. On 22 June, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights established the International Commission of Inquiry envisaged under the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement to investigate all serious violations of human rights and humanitarian law perpetrated in Côte d'Ivoire since 19 September 2002. The Commission arrived in the country on 15 July 2004 and has since met with various Ivorian authorities, including the President and key opposition figures. It has undertaken investigations throughout Côte d'Ivoire and also intends to visit Burkina Faso, Mali and Liberia. ONUCI, in collaboration with UNDP and other United Nations agencies, is providing administrative and logistic support to the Commission.

40. An increase in violence coupled with impunity has also been reported in Government-controlled areas. No judicial inquiry has been undertaken to identify and bring to justice the perpetrators of the violent attacks early in June against the French Embassy, the United Nations and other international personnel in Abidjan and, later in the month, against the members of the National Assembly during a debate on the draft law on the Independent Electoral Commission.

41. In the western part of the country, the human rights situation is mainly dominated by intercommunal conflict. Land ownership has been at the core of communal tensions, which have led to the exclusion of foreign migrants and northern ethnic groups. In Guiglo and Duékoué, an unidentified armed group has been targeting foreign communities since June, resulting in the death of at least seven civilians and the displacement of thousands of farm workers of Burkinabé origin, more than 6,000 of whom have fled to the camp for internally displaced persons in Guiglo. In N'Gattadolikro, FANCI has prevented more than 1,000 people, mainly from Mali, Guinea and Burkina Faso, from entering Government-controlled zones. During the night of 24/25 July 2004, FANCI elements from Abidjan prevented 126 Burkinabé, including 26 women and 42 children, from returning to their plantations in Gadouan. In addition, 110 families from northern ethnic groups, representing 1,440 persons, are still waiting in Daloa to return to their land. In order to address this situation, the Minister of National Reconciliation has established Community Committees on Reconciliation and Peace which are responsible for the prevention and resolution of conflicts through the sensitization of the population on reconciliation and peace.

VII. Preparations for the elections of October 2005

42. During the reporting period, only limited progress was made in preparing for the elections. The identification process, which is to serve as a basis for voter registration, has been hampered by various problems, including financial constraints facing the National Identification Supervisory Commission and the National Identification Office. Steps need to be taken to increase the capacity of these institutions to carry out the identification process in a timely fashion.

43. As noted above, an extraordinary session of the National Assembly has been convened to consider the laws envisaged under the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement, including laws on the Independent Electoral Commission and the nationality code which, under the Accra III Agreement, have to be adopted by 31 August. Moreover, the resolution of the issues relating to the revision of article 35 regarding eligibility for the presidency is to be completed by 30 September. Failure to adopt these laws on time would certainly have negative consequences for the operational timetable for organizing the elections. The Secretariat is planning to send an electoral mission to Côte d'Ivoire in the coming weeks to update an earlier assessment on the electoral process and make recommendations regarding the assistance that the United Nations can provide towards the preparation and conduct of free and fair elections.

VIII. Public information

44. The Operation's radio station, ONUCI FM, began regular broadcasts on 13 August 2004. The launch was made possible following the signing of an agreement on 5 August by my Special Representative and the Chairman of the Board of Radiodiffusion Télévision Ivoirienne at a ceremony chaired by the Prime Minister. ONUCI FM currently covers the greater Abidjan area. In the coming weeks, ONUCI intends to expand its coverage through a system of relays to include

the entire southern part of the country as well as Bouaké, Korhogo, Man and other areas in the north and west under the control of the Forces nouvelles.

45. In accordance with the mandate of the Operation, ONUCI FM will promote peace and national reconciliation in Côte d'Ivoire and provide its listeners with unbiased and non-partisan information, as local media have often encouraged ethnic tensions. In addition to regular news bulletins, ONUCI FM will broadcast cultural, political, economic, entertainment and sports programmes in French and as many as seven local languages, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. At the same time, the public information component of ONUCI will continue its other activities in support of the peace process, including media relations, public outreach, publications and media monitoring.

IX. Humanitarian situation

46. The conflict in Côte d'Ivoire has resulted in a serious deterioration in the social and economic fabric of the country and significant population displacement. There are an estimated 800,000 internally displaced persons, of whom some 500,000 have yet to be resettled. Up to 400,000 persons have fled the country.

47. The humanitarian community continues to play a key role in drawing attention and responding to the humanitarian needs in Côte d'Ivoire. A series of multi-agency and multi-donor field assessment missions, led by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, has provided more precise information on the prevailing humanitarian situation in the north of the country and highlighted a number of humanitarian concerns in all the main sectors. As a result of the collapse in the provision of basic services, urgent unmet needs have been reported in the areas of health, water and sanitation, education and protection. Although there are currently few cases of food shortages and malnutrition in Côte d'Ivoire, the World Food Programme (WFP) is warning that the food security situation remains precarious and could deteriorate, especially in those areas which are hosting displaced populations in the west and in the centre-east. In areas where food is produced in sufficient quantity to feed the population, the general climate of insecurity has caused difficulties in marketing the harvests, thus limiting the generation of much-needed revenues.

48. In areas under the control of the Forces nouvelles, the structures that supported the health-care system collapsed when over 80 per cent of health personnel left the region. As a result of a vaccination campaign in the Danané area, the overall health situation in the west is improving gradually, with a decrease in the number of measles cases. Furthermore, Médecins sans Frontières Belgium reported that the number of children treated for malnutrition at the hospital of Man has decreased slightly. This may be partly due to the resumption of WFP feeding activities. Despite some positive results obtained on the ground, the absence in the north of medical staff, who are essential partners in implementing large health programmes, has negatively affected efforts undertaken by the United Nations Children's Fund and other humanitarian organizations.

49. The third round of polio national immunization days led by the World Health Organization was carried out from 10 to 13 July, targeting 4.5 million children under 5 years of age throughout the country. This round was organized in response to

insufficient coverage during previous campaigns, and will be supplemented by two further rounds scheduled for October and November 2004.

50. In the Forces nouvelles-controlled areas, education remains a challenge. It is estimated that more than 1 million schoolchildren have had their school year disrupted. During recent months the Government organized final examinations in many parts of the west and the north and provided financial support to displaced university students, but many students continue to require assistance. In those areas, communities are coping with voluntary teaching. Despite the high number of volunteer teachers, however, the deployment of qualified teachers and the reopening of schools remain priorities.

51. Some 70,000 Liberian refugees continue to live in Côte d'Ivoire, where they sometimes encounter hostility from local extremist groups and some political leaders. Over 7,000 Liberian refugees were accepted for resettlement to the United States of America and Norway during the past year in a programme managed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). In view of improved conditions and security in Liberia, UNHCR plans to start on 1 October a voluntary repatriation operation for Liberian refugees from Côte d'Ivoire, and also from Guinea and Sierra Leone.

52. The level of humanitarian funding is still low. By early August, only 15.8 per cent of the $61 million requested through the revised consolidated appeal process had been received. However, some $20 million has been allocated for humanitarian activities, outside the appeal process, mainly for the health sector. While the "neither peace, nor war" situation could explain donor hesitancy, it is of paramount importance that funding be increased so that multisectoral humanitarian assistance can be provided to the most vulnerable people.

X. Economic situation

53. The economic implications of the current crisis have been dramatic. Economic indicators all point to a severe recession: businesses are closing down, and the relocation of businesses to other parts of the subregion has accelerated during the past three months as a consequence of the unpredictability of the political situation; unemployment is rising, prices of food commodities and utilities are high, while trade between the north and the south of the country is hindered by checkpoints and the current political situation.

54. The social situation is worrisome. It is estimated that 44 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line, compared to 38 per cent before the crisis of September 2002. As a result of the conflict, there is a real risk of an increase in the prevalence of HIV/AIDS from the current level of 9.7 per cent, already the highest in West Africa. With the deterioration of the economic and social indicators, the *Human Development Report 2004* indicates that Côte d'Ivoire is now 163 out of 167 countries ranked in the Human Development Index.

55. The decline in economic activities resulting from the Ivorian crisis has had a profound impact on the economy of the subregion, especially that of the landlocked countries of Burkina Faso and Mali. The two States depend on the Abidjan port as their gateway to external markets, and have also traditionally provided most of the workforce for the cocoa and coffee plantations which are the backbone of the

Ivorian economy. The suspension of the rail connections between the port of Abidjan and the borders with the two countries has put great strains on their economies, notably because it has forced the rerouting of their external exports through the ports of Tema, Ghana, and Nouakchott. The Government of Mali has estimated that it loses $15 million per month because of the Ivorian crisis.

XI. Mission support

56. On 29 June, ONUCI signed a status-of-forces agreement with the Government. Logistical support is provided for the deployment of troops to the mission and the respective sectors. The contingents from Bangladesh, France, Morocco and Pakistan are operating in the mission area under "wet lease" arrangements and are fully sufficient with respect to their logistics requirements except rations and food, which the United Nations will provide. Meanwhile, the contractual and logistics support arrangements with Pacific Architects and Engineers for the former ECOMICI contingents have been discontinued and memorandums of understanding between the United Nations, France and Belgium are being developed to ensure continuity of support to those contingents.

57. ONUCI negotiated with the Government of Côte d'Ivoire to acquire a building for use as an integrated headquarters for the Operation. The building is currently being refurbished to meet the Operation's requirements.

XII. Financial aspects

58. The General Assembly, by its resolution 58/310 of 18 June 2004, appropriated for ONUCI the amount of $297 million, inclusive of $96.4 million for the establishment of the Operation for the period from 4 April to 30 June 2004 and $200.6 million for its maintenance for the period from 1 July to 31 December 2004. This appropriation has been approved by the Assembly pending review of the budget of the Operation for the 2004/05 financial period during its fifty-ninth session.

59. Owing to the issuance of assessment letters in July 2004, contributions to the special account for ONUCI received by 31 July 2004 amounted to $0.4 million. In the interim, the financial requirements of the Operation are being met from the Peacekeeping Reserve Fund.

XIII. Observations

60. The Accra III Agreement, signed by all the Ivorian parties, which contains a framework and timeline for the implementation of the main provisions of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement, provides a clear road map for progress in the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire. I welcome the renewed spirit of statesmanship, cooperation, and compromise among the Ivorian parties which allowed the necessary political consensus to be forged at the Accra meeting. The meeting was also a further indication of the strong commitment of the international community and, in particular, African Heads of State, to ensuring the restoration of peace and stability in Côte d'Ivoire, and to assisting the Ivorian parties in their efforts towards that end.

61. It is encouraging that some progress has been made towards implementing the Accra Agreement, including the restoration of the integrity of the Government of National Reconciliation and the resumption of its activities. The National Assembly has also started consideration of key draft legislation envisaged under the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement. However, much remains to be done, within a short period of time, and I would urge the Ivorian parties to take all necessary measures to ensure that crucial deadlines envisaged for the adoption of legal reforms and the revision of article 35 of the Constitution on the eligibility criteria for the presidency are closely adhered to. These steps, together with the commencement of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process as scheduled on 15 October and progress towards the restoration of State authority nationwide, constitute essential elements for the restoration of normalcy in Côte d'Ivoire, and for the holding of free and fair elections in October 2005.

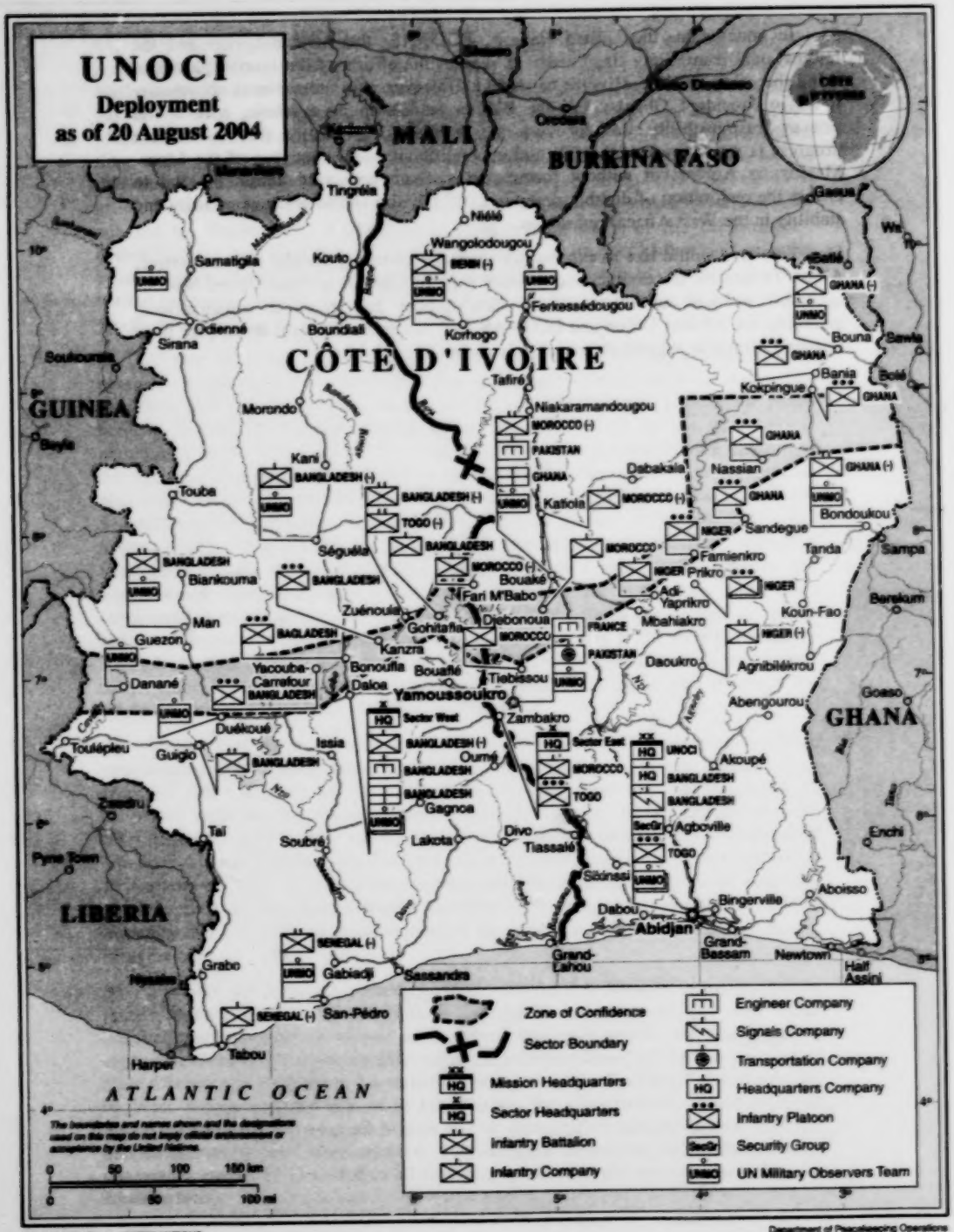
62. At this critical juncture, I would like to remind the Ivorian parties of their personal responsibility for ensuring that the commitments made in Accra are translated into concrete actions on the ground which will urgently move the peace process forward. It is also important that the commitment of the international community to the resolution of the Ivorian crisis, as demonstrated by the mission of the Security Council to West Africa in June 2004, and also at the recent Accra III high-level meeting, is maintained. I call on Council members and other concerned stakeholders to continue to urge the Ivorian parties to ensure that the implementation timetable for the Accra III Agreement is closely complied with. The fortnightly reports of the Monitoring Group provide a very useful tool for the international community to follow developments. At the same time, due consideration needs to be given to steps which could help to ensure that the peace process remains on track. I remind the parties, as conveyed to them by the Security Council mission to West Africa during its visit to Abidjan, that the Council intends to consider appropriate, targeted measures against individuals who obstruct the implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement.

63. While there have been some recent positive political developments, there remain deep concerns about the human rights situation throughout the country. It is essential that members of the Council continue to urge all Ivorian parties to cooperate with the International Commission of Inquiry, which arrived in Côte d'Ivoire on 15 July and is conducting its investigation into serious violations of human rights and humanitarian law committed since the beginning of the conflict on 19 September 2002. It is only by ensuring that the perpetrators of those atrocities are brought to justice and through effectively addressing the prevailing culture of impunity that a significant improvement in the country's human rights situation will be achieved.

64. I remain seriously concerned about the attacks that have been carried out in recent months against United Nations personnel and property and also other international personnel. It should be reiterated that such attacks are unacceptable, especially since ONUCI was established at the express request of the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and ECOWAS. As stated in the report of the Security Council mission to West Africa (S/2004/525 of 2 July 2004), the Government should take all necessary measures to stop all hostile and/or provocative actions against ONUCI and all United Nations representatives, including the disbanding of militias. Similar guarantees should be provided to all foreign presences in the country, including the Licorne force.

65. In conclusion, the United Nations, ECOWAS, the African Union and the international community stand ready to support the efforts of the Ivorian parties to bring the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire to an end. However, the international community looks to President Gbagbo and the Ivorian leadership as a whole, with whom primary responsibility lies for restoring normalcy, to ensure that substantive progress is made towards the full and unconditional implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement without further delay. Such concerted action is vital to ensure the restoration of durable peace in Côte d'Ivoire and to enhance security and stability in the West African subregion.

66. Finally, I would like to express my appreciation to my Special Representative, Albert Tévoédjrè, the civilian and military staff of ONUCI and the United Nations agencies, as well as humanitarian, development and regional organizations, including the African Union and ECOWAS, and numerous bilateral donors for their steadfast efforts to support the peace process in Côte d'Ivoire.


UNOCI
Deployment
as of 20 August 2004
MALI
BURKINA FASO
GUINEA
LIBERIA
GHANA
CÔTE D'IVOIRE
ATLANTIC OCEAN
Zone of Confidence
Sector Boundary
Mission Headquarters
Sector Headquarters
Infantry Battalion
Infantry Company
Engineer Company
Signals Company
Transportation Company
Headquarters Company
Infantry Platoon
Security Group
UN Military Observers Team
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.
0 50 100 150 km
0 50 100 mi
Map No. 4220 Rev.1 UNITED NATIONS
August 2004
Department of Peacekeeping Operations
Cartographic Section